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## THE FORECAST AND ADVENT OF MASS MIGRATION OF WATERFOWL THROUGH IOWA IN THE FALL OF 1957

By JAMES G. SIEH

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SPIRIT LAKE, IOWA

Modern meteorological methods and weather forecasting by way of radio and television can help Iowa waterfowl hunters determine conditions suitable for mass fall migrations. Hochbaum (1955: 106-7, 137) stated that ducks select anticyclonic (high pressure) weather for the start of their mass migrations. He indicated that high pressure, with its attendant clear sky and favorable wind, is a prerequisite for the beginning of mass migration. Bellrose (1957:21) concluded that the mass migrations of October 31-November 3, 1955, and the famous waterfowl migration on November 11, 1940, were not begun under the conditions stipulated by Hochbaum.

Meteorological conditions suitable for fall mass migrations cannot always be absolutely clear-cut; however, the analysis of weather data provides sufficient information for both the novice and the expert to make their own analysis and forecast. Hochbaum (1955:104) has stated that major flights of Blue-winged Teal in September, Canvasbacks and Redheads in October, and Lesser Scaups and Mallards in November occurred with a west-east opposition of high and low pressure areas, with a trough of wind flowing down the middle between the two air masses. Using the preceding rule of thumb, the Iowa prognosticator must remember that these weather patterns usually develop with cold fronts moving from the Arctic southward; or more precisely from northwestward to southeastward. There is a progressive transition of cold fall weather from north to south, with sudden thrusts of winter weather moving southward toward the Gulf. Meteorologically speaking, these are the unstable fall weather patterns establishing the more stable weather patterns of winter.

In the early fall, freezing temperatures in the higher latitudes and permanent snow cover tend to concentrate most species of ducks in southern Canada and in the northern U.S.A. Sudden thrusts of winter weather from the Arctic to the Gulf tend to coincide with mass migrations into Iowa. These mass migrations are usually accompanied by freezing temperatures, snowfall, and sustained winds from the northwest down the great plains to the Gulf. The most spectacular fall mass migration into Iowa is aptly termed "the grand passage." This passage is comprised largely of Mallards and Scaups. The local hunter anticipates this event, and a probable forecast of suitable flight conditions would be of great help.

Blue-winged Teal migrate through Iowa in descriptive "creep or drift" movements beginning in late August, reach peak numbers about mid-September, and complete their migration during October. The Blue-wings have been a neglected species as far as harvest is concerned except for the opening-day "shoot." The majority of this species migrate through Iowa before the "framework dates" permit an open season. The recruitment of teal in Iowa during the fall migratory period has made it difficult to appraise their response to meteorological patterns as far as mass migration is concerned.

Mass fall migrations of waterfowl were successfully forecast several days in advance of the flight dates in Iowa during the autumn of 1957. These forecasts were a part of the experimental program of the Technical Section of the Mississippi Flyway Waterfowl Council. According to pre-arranged plans, Ivory Rennels, Meteorologist in Charge of the Sioux City Weather

Station, telephoned us at 10:30 a.m. on October 21, 1957, concerning impending bad weather and meteorological conditions suitable for mass fall migration in Canada. A telephone call from William Leitch, Chief Biologist of Ducks Unlimited in Winnipeg, Manitoba, on the evening of October 21 confirmed that some migration was already in progress in Canada and mass movements likely or imminent. A telegram from Alex Dzubin, Canadian Wildlife Service, from Kindersley, Saskatchewan, sent on October 22, 1957, indicated "blowing snow and large mass of cold air covering southern Alberta and Saskatchewan. Should force out most birds from this region during next two days. Over 50 large flocks of ducks, mostly Mallards, and some Pintails moving south." Another telephone call from the U. S. Weather Bureau at Sioux City, Iowa, on October 23, 1957, at 11:30 a.m. stated a high-pressure area was expected to move into Iowa by the morning of October 24, 1957. This was sufficient information to assume that mass fall migration had been triggered in Canada, and that waterfowl could be expected to arrive in Iowa with the advance of cold Canadian air and the frontal system from the northwest. A telephone call at 9:00 p.m. on October 23, 1957, from Frank Bellrose, Illinois Natural History Survey, anticipating mass migration corroborated this assumption. A night letter sent out October 23, 1957, by Alex Dzubin from Kindersley, Saskatchewan, noting a heavy migration of ducks near Kindersley of over 100 flocks of Mallards moving south until early afternoon, and further communication from Bernard Gollop of the Canadian Wildlife Service and Frank McKinney of Delta Waterfowl Research Station, positively confirmed this assumption.

Mass fall migration was in progress in Iowa at daylight on October 24, 1957, and continued throughout the day until approximately 5:00 p.m. Strong northerly winds and heavy overcast sky characterized the flight conditions during the day. Especially large numbers of migrating geese passed over Iowa, with a comparatively small passage of ducks. These migrants utilized the wind currents and as the strong northerly winds began to subside about 3:30 p.m., the rate of passage of migrants was observed to diminish in the lakes region of Iowa. The wind had subsided by 5:30 p.m. and for all practical purposes mass migration also stopped. By 5:45 p.m. a band of clear sky was visible west and north of Estherville, Iowa, and by 6:00 p.m., in Spirit Lake, the sky had completely cleared, the wind had stopped, and mass migration ceased. A telephone call to Aberdeen, South Dakota, approximately 300 miles northwest of Spirit Lake, confirmed the assumption that the cloud cover and northerly winds had abruptly subsided there about noon the same day. Mass migration was in progress there during the morning hours coinciding with suitable wind and weather conditions.

During the early morning hours of October 25 and 26, migrating waterfowl were observed to arrive in northwestern Iowa. These laggards were the aftermath of the preceding mass migration. These morning flights were comprised largely of Mallards with considerable numbers of divers. These migrants provided a sprinkling of waterfowl in Iowa, and locally some excellent shooting.

The number of Mallards which were observed during the mass migration on October 24 indicated many more birds remained north of Iowa. Likewise, the weather pattern with its rapid passage of wind and cloud cover indicated many migrants were stalled enroute. In other words, pressure-pattern flying conditions were short-lived and more mass migration appeared probable with suitable weather.

Weather conditions again became critical in Canada on November 6, 1957. A letter dated November 6, 1957, from Mr. Rennels of the U.S. Weather Bureau in Sioux City, forecast the advance of a cold front through northern



Minnesota, northern Wisconsin, the Great Lakes, and New England. A telegram from W. G. Leitch on November 8, at 7:57 a.m. stated: "strong north winds, snow and falling temperatures indicate possibility of movement of most remaining waterfowl from Canada in next 24 hours. Delta advises considerable movement from north yesterday and today through station and on south." At 11:45 a.m. on November 8, 1957, James Nelson of the Saskatchewan Wildlife Service telephoned from Saskatoon this message: "Gradual movement of ducks south up to the 6th of November. On November 5 had snowfall in most areas. Clear sky the 7th with Mallards moving south. Most geese gone. Few remain. Most Mallards and Scaup have now moved south with very few Mallards remaining in territory." A telegram from Frank McKinney sent at 3:50 p.m. on November 8 reported "Mass migration underway at Delta."

Mass migration was underway at daylight on November 8, 1957, in the lakes region of Iowa and throughout the state. Strong northwest winds, gusts up to 50 miles per hour, and occasional snow squalls with patches of blue sky between, characterized the local weather. By telephone at 1:45 p.m., Mr. Rennels summarized the situation as: "Low center forming over Duluth and 100 miles east. Quite windy, 35 m.p.h. winds. Heavy snow in northern Minnesota, northern Wisconsin and also 100 miles east of the Dakotas. Ten-degree temperatures in northern Minnesota and 15-degree temperatures in southern Minnesota."

Migration continued throughout the daylight hours of November 8 and it was assumed well into the night hours (bright moonlight). The wind abruptly subsided during the night, the sky cleared, and a dead calm prevailed. In northern Iowa ice up to 2 inches thick formed on the shallow lakes. At daybreak on November 9, 1957, inactive groups of tired ducks on the ice and in open holes were all that indicated the mass migration of the previous day. The sun came up over the broad expanse of the prairie in a clear blue sky, and the tired waterfowl were resting from their journeys.

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## WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS WINTERING IN IOWA CITY

By FRED W. KENT

7 East Market St.  
IOWA CITY, IOWA

(With photographs by the author)

White-winged Crossbills were observed at least 25 times during the past winter, from November 24, 1957, to February 22, 1958. They were first spotted by Mrs. P. P. Laude while we were watching Red-breasted Nuthatches and Pine Siskins in the conifers west of the University Hospitals. They flew to a nearby grove in the old golf course. We followed and watched them for some time, as it was the first time we had ever seen them in Iowa.

For the next few weeks they frequented these coniferous plantings and fed on the small cones of the Douglas fir, American spruce and occasionally on hemlocks. When possible these small cones were picked off the tree and held with their feet while they extracted the seeds. At other times they



"THEY SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME ON A SINGLE CONE . . ."

reached down to feed off the cone or even fed on the dropped cones on the ground. While feeding they were quite unconcerned with observers and often permitted approach to as near as 6 feet while on the ground.

There were several flocks of from six to 20 birds, often on the move and easily identified by the rattling flight call interspersed with single, clear notes. On alighting or leaving, usually one or two males would alight on the top branch of a tree and give a number of loud call notes as if signals for the flock.

The first flocks consisted of about equal numbers of males, females and immatures. Once a bird was seen feeding another bird. While feeding the birds were silent except for an occasional low note. Sometimes they were found by the sound of chips falling from the cones on which they were feeding. After the first few weeks they shifted their feeding to the larger cones of the Norway spruce and were seen only in these trees for rest of the winter, mostly in the areas at the west edge of the city in a large planting of these trees. They were also seen in a farm grove, and at Amana, with reports from a few other places.

While feeding on the larger cones they were difficult to spot as they hung upside down on the cone while extracting the seeds. They spent considerable time on a single cone, often on the inside of a clump of cones or in the shadow. I would think I had just two sighted, and then be quite surprised when six or eight would suddenly fly off from the same tree. As conspicuous as the males were in sunlight or on top of a tree, they blended surprisingly when on cones and could hardly be seen except when moving. Of course the greenish females were completely camouflaged in the green foliage.

In the latter part of the winter only pairs, or three or four, were seen and there was much less calling. Once several snatches of song were heard. On another occasion a pair of Crossbills joined a few Chickadees and Juncos in fussing at a Screech Owl in a small pine tree.

Even with the telescope combination they were difficult to photograph, as they were usually in the shade or behind a cone or on a swinging branch. But the many hours of watching and photographing also contributed to a feeling of intimate acquaintance with this interesting new bird.



MALE WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILL  
(Plainly showing the crossed bill).

## A SURVEY OF WHITE-WINGED CROSSBILLS IN NORTHWEST IOWA, WINTER OF 1957-'58

By WILLIAM YOUNG WORTH

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SIOUX CITY, IOWA

The past winter began with scattered local reports of crossbills. These led me to make the most intensive and extended search that I have ever made for winter birds in this area.

The northern finches, with the possible exception of the Purple Finch, are heavy feeders of pine seeds, so one should look for them in plantings of conifers. They eat other foods, but one is more likely to find them in their chosen habitat. In the past 30 years I have mentally noted all conifer or Russian olive plantings in this entire area. It was not difficult to plan my automobile trips for any given day. My only trouble was, I had not kept abreast of progress on farm and highway improvement. On several occasions I arrived at former rows of fine trees only to find they had been eliminated in a road-widening project or in some sweeping curve at the corner of a farm.



The main source of conifers was my logbook of memories of every cemetery in this area, where I knew I could find even a small stand of pine trees of some variety. A tour of the local cemeteries and one nursery produced enough White-winged Crossbill to fire me with determination to cover the entire area within a reasonable distance of Sioux City.

My first trip, with my wife on December 19, 1957, was to the southeast down to the dying town of Ticonic, and on a mile or two to the lovely old Grant Township cemetery. This well-kept, little burial ground is on a high bluff above the Little Sioux River valley. The view is grand there, as one looks across and up the narrow valley of the Little Sioux. As we approached the graveyard my hopes soared when a flock of six rosy-colored White-winged Crossbills flew across the road near the car. This was about the only winter bird life we saw in that cemetery. We made a tour of the area and found only chickadees, jays, crows and one Cedar Waxwing, the latter bird feeding on a meager supply of cedar berries. Although the spruce and pine trees carried bountiful supplies of cones, there was little evidence of crossbill work under the trees.

We drove on to visit the Smithland cemetery and the well-conifered area in the north part of the town, but did not find crossbills. Our next stop was the well-cared-for Oto cemetery. There we found Redpolls in scant numbers. The supply of spruce cones was very heavy. The large Anthon cemetery was then looked over. In it we found a few Redpolls and several sassy Red-breasted Nuthatches. We next stopped at the old Lucky Valley cemetery, but not finding anything we drove back to Sioux City.

The next day we drove north and east. From the highway the Lawton cemetery looked rather windswept, but I would never forgive myself if I missed even one area, so we turned off the road and parked the car. The spruce trees in the Lawton cemetery were rather small, but they were loaded with cones. I worked through the south part and found nothing, but heard Redpolls and Siskins to the north. Looking into one tree with binoculars I found those birds as well as a Red-breasted Nuthatch and five or six White-winged Crossbills. As I moved slowly back to the car, another flock of nearly a dozen crossbills flew in from the north.

Our next stop was the Le Mars cemetery, which has the finest stand of conifers in the entire area. The trees are old and many of them very large—a noteworthy fact since none but the sturdy red cedar is native to this area. Their crop of cones was very heavy. Mrs. Youngworth and I spent a long time among these grand old trees and were rewarded by seeing more than 100 White-winged Crossbills, dozens of Redpolls, dozens of Pine Siskins, hundreds of Slate-colored Juncos, many Goldfinches and a score or more each of Red-breasted Nuthatches and Golden-crowned Kinglets. Most of these birds were busy feeding on fruit of the spruce trees, although some of them fed on larch cones and a few in the pine trees. Since the ground was covered with cones and free pine seeds, it would seem that the juncos must eat some of these seeds. The kinglets were of course, finding plenty of nits and plant-lice larva among the pine needles.

I was still interested in deciding how far the main flight of crossbills was going southward, so a few days later I made a fruitless trip over much of Dakota County, Nebraska, and failed to find a single crossbill.

My goal then must be to the east and northeast of Sioux City. On January 3, 1958, with temperature below zero, I drove directly to Correctionville, Iowa. I knew the cemetery there had a fine growth of conifers. My hopes were high and I was soon rewarded by a nice flock of White-winged Crossbills. Although it was a very cold day, I worked through the area carefully.

I found nearly 75 crossbills feeding there, in addition to Pine Siskins, Redpolls, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches and Juncos.

I now had a feeling this was to be my big day and I hurried on to the Washta cemetery. There I found nearly as many White-winged Crossbills as at Correctionville, along with the usual Redpolls, Pine Siskins, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, and Juncos. This cemetery has a fine stand of conifers, in fact heavy and old enough to harbor a pair of Great Horned Owls. When I flushed the owls, I wondered about their effect on the crossbills. However, on looking over the big, regurgitated pellets I found under their roosting tree, I decided the pellets were made up entirely of fur and bones from mammals, so apparently at this time of the winter they are not bothering the birds. It was now lunch time and as I sat there eating, I enjoyed a rare treat. A flock of a dozen or more beautiful male White-winged Crossbills sat above me and serenaded me with their lovely Goldfinch-like carols. As I left the area, I flushed two Red-bellied Woodpeckers.

The rather open Quimby cemetery has many small conifers but only a few large ones, and in these I found a small flock of Redpolls. Just before I reached the highway I flushed a flock of Mourning Doves. They numbered about 30 and from their rapid flight I assumed they were in the best of health despite the frigid weather.

The Pierson cemetery has a very fine row of spruce trees around its entire perimeter. I had expected a large number of White-winged Crossbills, but had to content myself with a small flock of a dozen. As I left the cemetery with its Crossbills, Redpolls and Red-breasted Nuthatches, I could visualize hungry crossbills coming in from other areas later in the winter, as the food supply there was abundant.

My next stop was a very well-kept cemetery at Kingsley. I estimated that more than 75 White-winged Crossbills were spending the winter there. Kingsley is also blessed with many fine spruce-tree plantings about the town yards. I noticed small flocks of crossbills taking off and flying toward the town. In the cemetery were the usual friends of the crossbills: Redpolls, Pine Siskins, Golden-crowned Kinglets, Red-breasted Nuthatches, Slate-colored Juncos, and others. In most of the cemeteries the crossbills allowed close approach, often to within a few feet. The birds at Kingsley were no exception and I stood and watched at 20 feet while a good many of them fed on the ground on fallen cones.

My last stop for the day was at the Merville cemetery, which is large in area and contains all coniferous trees. No crossbills or other birds of interest were found there, however. I remembered a planting of spruce trees on the edge of town and I hurried there. This last stop was not in vain as I found a small flock of White-winged Crossbills and almost as many Red-breasted Nuthatches—a fitting end for a very fine day in the field.

Although I believed there was an almost total absence of crossbills south of Sioux City, I still wished to make sure when I thought of the many conifer plantings in the area. On January 4, 1958, we made the trip south. Our first stop was at the neat Climbing Hill cemetery with its many large spruces, but not a single crossbill or any evidence of their feeding did we find there. We went on to the abandoned town of Peiro, where the beautiful little Bethel Cemetery and the old white church are reminders of a town that once existed. The pine trees in the burial ground are the finest in this area. As I left the car to enter the cemetery, I heard crossbills in flight and judged that five or six birds had taken wing. We flushed a Great Horned Owl, saw several Red-breasted Nuthatches and Brown Creepers, but failed to see the cross-



bills again. Inspection revealed they had been feeding on three of the spruce trees.

We continued our field trip and visited the cemeteries at Holly Springs, Sloan, and Salix. The crossbills were absent and we found no evidence of their work. The Onawa cemetery has a fine stand of large spruce trees, but again we failed to find crossbills. As a side trip we drove through what is called the Old Whiting Settlement, an interesting collection of closely-knit farms where there are some huge spruce trees, but we saw no crossbills.

The final field trip in the White-winged Crossbill survey was made on January 11, 1958. The day was clear, the ground bare, and temperature was near fifty degrees, with a very strong wind. We started at Sioux City fairly early in the morning, and our route was up the Big Sioux River valley.

Stops were made near Westfield and two cemeteries were checked at Akron. Although one had a good stand of conifers with plenty of cones, not a single northern finch was seen. We drove on to Hawarden and its well-kept cemetery, where a very thorough search of one hour duration revealed five male and what I assumed to be two female White-winged Crossbills. By this time the wind was blowing 40 to 50 miles per hour. The crossbills fed only on the lee side of the spruce trees to keep out of the wind.



SHORT-EARED OWL

Photographed in the Iowa City region by Fred W. Kent with telescopic attachment on camera.

Lunch was eaten at Oak Grove State Park. Our trip through the park disclosed only the common winter birds. Going north from the park we checked many farm wind-breaks. Although we flushed the regular winter birds, plus two Meadowlarks and a score or more of wintering Mourning Doves, our quest for crossbills was in vain. Driving nearly to Inwood, we back-tracked a bit and visited the interesting Newton Hills State Park south of Canton, in South Dakota. The park was closed to auto traffic, but we walked in and spent the next one and a half hours prowling about. Normal winter bird life was present, but we found nothing to record as rare or different. On the trip home we checked still more farm shelter-belts, but saw no more crossbills.

Our conclusions on the crossbill invasion of the Sioux City area are based on our observations from December 19, 1957, to January 11, 1958, during which time we drove over 700 miles by car and checked not only the cemeteries in the area but dozens of small farm plantings where we thought we might find crossbills. We found that the White-winged Crossbills preferred the larger plantings of the cemeteries and it was a waste of time to look at the average farm planting of a few trees. We also determined that where we found crossbills we usually found numerous Redpolls, Siskins and Red-breasted Nuthatches. Our observations indicated the heavy cone supply would furnish food through the entire winter if the birds decided to remain more or less stationary. The enigma of the whole series of field trips was the absence of Red Crossbills and Pine Grosbeaks. Care was taken to go over every flock of White-winged Crossbills with binoculars for these two species but none were found.

## NOTES ON THE CHECK-LIST OF IOWA BIRDS

By MARTIN L. GRANT

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CEDAR FALLS, IOWA

Philip DuMont recently published (*Iowa Bird Life* 27:100, Dec., 1957) a list of 19 species of birds in which the common name in the new fifth edition of the A.O.U. Check-List (also reviewed in the same issue) is different from that in the 1957 revision of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union Check-List of Iowa Birds. There is another minor typographical change: Leconte's Sparrow (previous A.O.U. and I.O.U. lists) or LeConte's Sparrow (present I.O.U. list) becomes Le Conte's Sparrow (present A.O.U. list).

The Iowa Union Committee (Dr. George Hendrickson, chairman) which was responsible for the editing of the Iowa list, did its best to anticipate all possible changes by checking, through Mr. DuMont, with the A.O.U. Committee, but after the Iowa list was printed, the above-mentioned 19 changes were made in the final editing of the A.O.U. list. This is to be regretted, but when another printing of the Iowa list is made, these changes can be incorporated. Only in this manner can the opposite principles of standardization and progress, which so often are conflicting, be reconciled. In the meantime, it would be convenient if each member of the I.O.U., especially if he might later be submitting manuscript to *Iowa Bird Life*, make these 19 changes on a copy of his new Iowa check-list, to use for reference.

No list can ever be permanent. For example, there have already this winter been enough records of the White-winged Crossbill to re-establish this bird on the I.O.U. list, though it was taken off in 1943 for lack of records. Incidentally, of the 19 changes mentioned above, six serve to return the name to the form that was used on the Iowa list just previously, from 1943 to 1956, and thus are not inconvenient to make.

When the new Iowa check-list, thus revised, is compared with the previous one, which had been in use substantially unchanged since 1943, changes in 74 names become apparent, falling into eight categories: (1) six names added in the 1957 edition (Snowy Egret, Yellow-crowned Night Heron, Harlan's Hawk, Long-billed Dowitcher, Summer Tanager, and Pine Grosbeak), (2) two names removed (Rock Dove, Gambel's Sparrow), (3) four wholly new names for previously listed birds (American Widgeon, Peregrine Falcon, Dunlin, and Veery), (4) 11 names in which a word has been added (e.g., Common Crow, American Goldfinch), (5) nine names from which a word has been removed (e.g., Mallard, Lesser Scaup), (6) 25 names in which a word has been changed (e.g., Western Kingbird, Common Grackle), (7) 11 minor changes in spelling or punctuation, and (8) six changes in the arrangement of the names (three herons, American Widgeon, Gray Partridge, and Piping Plover). To sum up, over 25% of the names have been changed in some way or another, an amount which becomes quite significant in writing up local bird lists.

## THE 1957 CHRISTMAS BIRD CENSUS IN IOWA

Compiled by WOODWARD H. BROWN

Generally fair weather during the 1957 census period helped a record number of observers to identify the largest number of species to be reported since the inauguration of this event in Iowa. A total of 210 participants at 22 stations observed 98 species, or 10 more than the previous high of 88 reported in 1953 and 1955. Davenport, with the largest number of observers (54), again headed the list with 75 species.

While there were many unusual observations worthy of comment, the highlight of the census was the White-winged Crossbill. This species, which is not even on the Iowa Check-List, and which was designated in the Distributional Check-List as a "casual winter visitor" in one area, and "accidental" in another, was reported from no fewer than 10 stations and was seen during the census period at two others. In contrast to 1956 when it was reported from only one station, the Red-breasted Nuthatch was observed this time at 15 of the 22 stations. The two reports from Sioux City include 40 of this species compared with only 32 of the White-breasted variety. A striking change in the distribution of Bald Eagles occurred in 1957. A year ago Davenport reported 84 and Dubuque two; in 1957 Davenport had only 31 and Dubuque four, while Clinton had 50.

All stations reported Red-bellied Woodpeckers, Downy Woodpeckers, Blue Jays, Chickadees, White-breasted Nuthatches, Cardinals and Juncos. Starlings and House Sparrows were doubtless seen but not reported from one station. Three species appearing on the census list for the first time are Black-crowned Night Heron, Glaucous Gull and Hermit Thrush. Four species were reported for only the second time, viz. Blue Goose, Peregrine Falcon, Brown-headed Cowbird and White-winged Crossbill; 22 species were reported from only one, and 15 species from only two stations. Many of these freak observations are species which normally leave prior to the coming of winter but which, because of physical disability, or possibly an abundance of food, have remained in the area.

Areas covered, census dates, weather data and lists of observers are shown below. Information which has been furnished regarding unusual species is included and the species' names in the table are followed by asterisks.

1. BACKBONE STATE PARK (Delaware County). Dec. 22; 9 a. m. to 4:20 p. m. Temp. 40° to 48°. Ground bare and muddy; old snow in a few shelter-



ed places; river open; light south wind. Trip included a trip to Wapsipinicon River woods upriver from Quasqueton in the afternoon; 3 miles on foot, 65 by car. Observers together. M. L. Jones, Loren Jones, Paul Pierce, F. J. Pierce.

2. CEDAR FALLS. (Snag Creek, Black Hawk Co. Park, Beaver Creek, Union Bridge, Wyth Park, Hartman Reserve, and other Cedar River areas; river-bottom forest 60% upland forest 5%, savanna 10%, fields and prairies 25%.) Dec. 28; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear; temp. 13° to 25°; wind, none; 1 in. hard snow on ground; ponds frozen, rivers and creeks 35% open. Observers (14) in 3 parties. Total party-hours, 18 (14 on foot, 4 by car), total party-miles, 143 (33 on foot, 110 by car). Martin L. Grant, Eleanor Eifert, Helen Glasener, Russell Hays, Dina Madsen, Eleanor O'Connell, John O'Connell, Beulah Rugg, Maxine Schwanke, Florence Spring, Doris White, Jean Martin, Mrs. Wallace Jones, Mrs. George Sierk.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet was clearly seen at eye-level, 20 ft. distant, with 8x glasses (M.L.G.)

No details furnished for Goshawks.

3. CEDAR RAPIDS (7½-mile radius centering on the Federal Building, Cedar Lake, Shaver Park, Cedar Memorial Cemetery, Marion Springs, Riverside Park, Ellis Park, roadsides to Palo, Fairfax and South River Road). Dec. 29; 8 a. m. to 5 p.m. Overcast, sun broke through once or twice; temp. 15° to 22°; wind NE, 0 to 10 m.p.h.; ground bare; 6 miles on foot, 60 by car. Observers (10) in 2 parties. Seddie Cogswell, Jr., Mrs. Lucille Elson, Mr. and Mrs. Leonard Grabau, Mr. and Mrs. Robert Huey, Lillian Serbousek, Dr. and Mrs. Robert Vane, Myra Willis.

4. CLINTON (7½-mile radius centering on Iowa bank of Mississippi River 7 miles north of Clinton-Fulton Bridge, including Lock 13 and Spring Lake Refuge in Illinois and Eagle Point Park in Iowa; open farmland 45%, deciduous woodland 30%, river shoreline 10%, coniferous woodland 10%, residential area 5%). Dec. 28; 7 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Clear; temp. 28° to 40°; wind N-NW; ground bare; river open. Total party-hours, 15 (7 on foot, 8 by car); total party-miles, 179½ (9½ on foot, 170 by car). Observers (5) in two parties. Lewis Blevins, James Lewis, Fred Leshner, Maurice Leshner, Peter Petersen, Jr.

5. DAVENPORT (7½-mile radius centered at Memorial Bridge tollgate). Dec. 29; 7 a. m. to 5 p. m. Wind NE, 9-11 m.p.h.; temp. 21°-31°; overcast, snow flurries in p. m.; ground, bare; river, open. Party-hours, 98 (46 on foot, 52 by car); party-miles, 513 (71 on foot, 442 by car). Observers (54) in 20 parties. Lewis Blevins, Mr. and Mrs. Ray Cole, Dorothy Cowley, Mr. and Mrs. W. Dau, Dale Dickinson, Mr. and Mrs. Leo Doering, Elton Fawks, Patty Fawks, Don Garrett, Mr. and Mrs. Floyd Gold, Jeannette Graham, Mrs. Emma Graham, Dick Greer, Ted and Teddy, Jr. Greer, Jim Hanssen, Norwood Hazard, Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Hazard, Mr. and Mrs. James Hodges, Mr. and Mrs. Walter Janovich, Dave, James and Mary Krause, Dr. and Mrs. J. P. Leonard, Jim Lewis, Dick Lorenz, Mrs. Frank Marquis, Alice Mattson, Lucille and Miriam Miner, Jerry McConoughey, Ed Meyer, Mr. and Mrs. Pete Petersen, Peter Petersen, Jr., Don Price, Joe Rowley, Tom Rowley, Mrs. Blanche Sandburg, Paul Salstrom, Dennis Sheets, Kent Stewart, Earl Tomlinson, Bob Trial, Gordon Vangsnes, Fred Whitebook.

Cowbird was found by Jim Hanssen; 2 had been in the yard of Elton Fawks on several occasions. Glaucous Gull was seen by Peter Petersen Jr. and has been found at Lock 14 each winter for the past 5 years. The Hermit Thrush was seen by Elton Fawks at such close range that no glasses were needed. Peregrine Falcon was observed by James Hodges on Credit Island. Ruby-crowned Kinglet observed by Jeanette Graham and Dennis Sheets on

Vandruff's Island on Rock River at a distance of 15 feet for positive identification.

6. DECORAH (Fields, river and creek bottoms and brushy and timbered areas around Decorah, Twin Springs, Upper Iowa River, Canoe Creek, Bear Creek and Highlandville). Dec. 28; total miles, 200 (23 on foot, 177 by car). Observers, 19. Marietta Bauder, Steven Belgum, Billy Berg, Maybelle Brown, Andy Daubendiek, Robert Daubendiek, Mrs. Burt Henning, Dale Henning, Darrell Henning, Dr. S. A. Hoslett, Mrs. Bob Hunt, Mike Jensen, Dr. Geo. Knudson, James Lange, Clarence Montague, Robert Pfister, Mrs. Bill Walker, Lynn Walker, Jack Wheeler.

7. DES MOINES (Kingleet Woods, Dove Woods, Sycamore Park, Fisher's Lake, Margo Frankel Woods, Pine Hill Cemetery, Walnut Woods, Brown's Woods, Dale Maffit Res., Gray's Lake, Pioneer Park, Des Moines Airport, Gilchrist Tract, Crocker Woods, Wakonsa, Flint Acres, Waterworks Park, Glendale Cemetery, Greenwood Park; deciduous woodland 65%, open fields 25%, water and riverside 7%, coniferous woodland 3%). Dec. 21; 7:30 a. m. to 5 p. m.; weather clear; ground bare. Total party-hours, 34 (24½ on foot, 9½ by car); total party-miles, 153½ (22½ on foot, 131 by car). Observers (20) in 4 parties. Mrs. Ruth Binsfeld, Mrs. Gladys Black, Mrs. Dwight Brooke, Carl Brown, Mr. and Mrs. Woodward H. Brown, Ruth Dallinger, Mrs. Lester Haskell, Joe Kennedy, Dr. Phillip Moulton, Mrs. Gladys Nicholson, Mrs. Russell Nicholson, Dr. Robert Norton, Dr. and Mrs. Harold R. Peasley, Dr. Oscar Richter, Irene Smith, Bruce Stiles, Mary Ellen Warters, Lynn Willcockson.

Bohemian Waxwing first observed with a flock of Cedar Waxwings in a crabapple tree. The Bohemian remained after the Cedars had left and was studied at very close range by members of two parties. White-winged Crossbills which have been seen many times this winter were observed in two locations.

8. DUBUQUE (Linwood and Mt. Calvary cemeteries, Eagle Point Park, City Island, Dubuque's Grave area, Little Maquoketa River, Mississippi River sloughs and Sinope Creek area in Fisconsin; open fields 10%, coniferous woodlands 15%, deciduous woodlands 40%, river sloughs 35%). Dec. 21; 7:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Bright and clear; temp. 25° to 42°; wind N, 0 to 8 m.p.h.; 2 in. of day-old snow; river open below the dam, several large areas above dam. Total party-hours, 18 (16 on foot, 2 by car); total party-miles, 39 (12 on foot, 27 by car). Observers (18) in 3 parties. C. O. Johnson, Ival Schuster, Phyllis Shultz, R. K. Lampe, Ed Heuser, Virginia Ellwanger, Robert Spahn, Dennis English, Imelda Wunderlick, Leonor Wunderlick, Elizabeth Wolff, Connie Lewis, Tim Scharman, Douglas Gukiesen, Mr. and Mrs. George Crossley, James A. and Jimmy Dockal.

9. ESTHERVILLE-SPENCER (Ft. Defiance State Park, Cheever Lake, Four Mile Lake, coniferous grove 3 mi. north of Superior and Spencer). Dec. 29; 9 a. m. to 4 p. m.; clear to partly cloudy; temp. 4° to 10°; wind NE, 15 m.p.h.; snow only in protected areas and drifts. Total party-hours, 22 (8 on foot, 14 by car); total party-miles, 86 (6 on foot, 80 by car). Observers (4) in 2 parties. Drs. Everett and Eunice Christensen, Myrle and Margaret Jones.

10. FAIRFIELD (Waterworks and Old Settlers Park, Evergreen Cemetery, Walton Lake Club Grounds, wooded area south of Fairfield Country Club, hilly timber near "Greased Lightning" hill south; north of Fairfield, and south of City disposal plant). Jan. 5; 1 to 5 p. m. Partly cloudy, temp. 38°; chilly SW wind; ground snow-covered, ponds frozen. Observers (7) in 3 parties. Margaret Herliska, Mrs. Marie Grauel, Mary Olson, Mr. and Mrs. Ben J. Taylor, Dr. Floyd W. Von Ohlen, William Colsch.

(Continued on page 16)







11. IOWA CITY (7½-mile radius covering same territory as in previous years). Dec. 28; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Weather clear, temp. 20°-36°; ground bare, river partly open. Observers (7) in 2 parties. Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Decker, F. W. Kent, Mr. and Mrs. T. H. Kent, Dr. and Mrs. M. C. Pepernik.

12. LAMONI (Parts of a 7½-mile radius centering 2 miles east of Lamoni; open farmland, brushy roadsides, trip to Nine Eagles State Park, and observations at 2 feeding stations). Jan. 3; 9 a. m. to 5:45 p. m.; temp. 0° to 20°; clear and quiet; wind E. 7 m.p.h.; 3 in. snow on ground; creeks and ponds frozen. Total party-hours, 19 (7 on foot, 12 by car); total party-miles, 54 (4 on foot, 50 by car). Observers (11) in 5 parties. Lorraine Derry, J. Donald Gillaspay, Pauline Hodges, Mr. and Mrs. John Kubec, Dorothy Rauch, Ruby Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Silver, Mr. and Mrs. Cecil Teale.

13. OTTUMWA (Southern and eastern parts of Wapello Co.). Dec. 29; 9 a. m. to 12:30 p. m. Cloudy, temp. 35°; wind NE; 1 mile on foot, 75 miles by car. Mrs. Orville T. Upp.

14. PINE HOLLOW STATE PARK (Dubuque Co.). Dec. 31; 7:30 a.m. to 12:30 p. m. Temp. 16°; north wind, 15 m.p.h.; 1 in. old and 2 in. new snow on ground; 4 miles on foot, 30 by car, including trip from Farley to the park and return. George E. Crossley.

15. PINE LAKE, ELDORA (Roadside and adjacent fields). Jan. 4; 8:30 a. m. to 12:30 p. m. Sun shining; temp. 6° to 25°; wind very light from south; 1 mile on foot, 37 by car. Mr. and Mrs. Harold B. Brown.

Ruby-crowned Kinglet, no details. (Ed.)

16. PLEASANTVILLE (City of Pleasantville, White Breast Creek valley, Coal Creek valley, Des Moines River valley near Bennington Bridge, Red Rock Cemetery and vicinity). Dec. 24; 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. Temp. 27° to 50°. Mrs. Gladys B. Black.

17. SHENANDOAH (7½-mile radius, centering approximately at Farragut; river woods 20%, open woods, fields, orchards 30%, open farmland and prairie 50%). Jan. 1; 8 a. m. to 6 p. m. Temp. -6° to 14°; wind variable westerly, 0 to 3 m.p.h.; 4½ in. snow, streams frozen, rivers and ponds partly open. Total party-hours, 23½ (10 on foot, 13½ by car), total party-miles, 212 (9 on foot, 203 by car). Observers (8) in 3 parties. Mrs. Robert I. Bordner, Mr. and Mrs. Francis M. Braley, Nancy Collins, Mr. and Mrs. William H. Collins, Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Vaughn.

18. SIOUX CITY (War Eagle's Monument Woods, confluence area of Missouri and Big Sioux Rivers, Riverside Woods, Gordon Drive along Missouri River, new highway 12 along Big Sioux River to old highway 12, Stone Park, Logan Park, Graceland Park, Floyd Park Cemetery, Morningside Nurseries, Half Moon Lake area, and hilly woodland near old Trinity College; hilly woodland and park 40%, wooded stream 15%, coniferous cemetery 10%, open field and marsh 25%, city and suburban areas 10%). Dec. 29; 8 a. m. to 5 p. m. Clear, temp. 11° to 23°; light wind from SE; ground free of ice; lakes and streams frozen except in protected areas; Big Sioux open from Power Plant to Missouri River confluence; Missouri open in places with much floating ice. Total hours afield 38, and total miles 137 (125 by car and 12 on foot). Observers (11) in 6 parties. Mrs. Helen Barrett, Mark Jones, Mr. and Mrs. Darell Hanna, Mr. and Mrs. John Lueshen, Dr. W. R. Montgomery, Robert Nickolson, Dr. and Mrs. J. L. Schott, Dr. Starry.

19. SIOUX CITY (to Ticonic and return). Dec. 20; 6 hours. Clear, windy, temp. 50°; ground bare, back roads muddy; 100 miles by car, 2 miles on foot. Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Youngworth.

20. WATERLOO (Black Hawk Creek area 50%, Byrnes Park, 25% coniferous, 25% deciduous). Dec. 22; 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Cloudy, temp. 38° to 46°;

wind 0 to 5 m.p.h.; ground bare except for icy spots, Black Hawk Creek half open. R. M. Hays.

21. WATERLOO (Sweet Marsh, woods along Wapsipinicon River and Crane Creek, farmland of southeastern Bremer and northern Black Hawk counties, and Hickory Nut Grove). Jan. 1; 7 a. m. to 4 p. m. Clear until mid-morning when sky became overcast with mackerel clouds, light snow at 3 p. m.; temp.  $-10^{\circ}$  to  $15^{\circ}$ ; wind NW, 0 to 10 m.p.h.; ground covered with frozen, crusty snow overlaid by light, drifted snow; 6 in. to knee-deep drifts; ponds frozen, swift-running water in Wapsipinicon River and Plum Creek at Sweet Marsh; 12 miles by foot, 85 by car. Myrle M. Burk, Martin L. Grant, Russell Hays, Rodger Moon, Thomas Moon, Ronald A. Ryder, Florence Spring.

No details given for Goshawks.

22. WEBSTER CITY (7½-mile radius centering on Des Moines and 2nd Sts., including Graceland Cemetery, Kendall Young Park, and areas along the Boone River; woodland edges and brushy areas 35%, deciduous woodland 30%, open farmland and fields 19% mixed woods 16%). Dec. 27; 7:30 a. m. to 4:30 p. m. Partly cloudy to cloudy; temp.  $30^{\circ}$  to  $41^{\circ}$ ; wind SW to NW, 2 to 10 m.p.h.; 1 in. of melting snow on ground; river and streams about 75% open; total party-hours  $12\frac{1}{4}$  (10 on foot,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  by car); total party-miles 58 (10 on foot, 48 by car). Observers (3) in 2 parties. Dennis L. Carter, Donald Johnson, Heber Johnson.

The Evening Grosbeak, a female, was studied at close range by Dennis Carter in a cedar grove on the east side of the Boone River, 7 miles south of town.



SHORT-EARED OWL  
F. W. Kent photograph



## ADDITIONAL BIRD NOTES WHICH ACCOMPANIED THE CENSUSES

Backbone State Park.—A lone Robin was seen in Winthrop on Dec. 21.

Cedar Falls.—Flocks of White-winged Crossbills numbering as high as 18 were seen in the area from Nov. 23 to Dec. 26.

Cedar Rapids.—A pair of *Branta canadensis hutchinsii* had been seen daily on Cedar Lake but could not be found on the day of the census.

Clinton.—Other species seen during the count period were White-winged Crossbills, Red Crossbill, Lesser Scaup and Wood Duck.

Des Moines.—Additional species seen during the period: Ring-billed Gull, Saw-whet Owl, Evening Grosbeak and Pine Siskins. Siskins have been seen all winter and in larger numbers than in any recent year. The Evening Grosbeak had been visiting a feeder for a month but was not called to the attention of Audubon members until after the census.

Estherville.—Bare fields made roadside birding very poor, and Meadowlarks and Longspurs which had been abundant could not be located for the census. Purple Finches, a Cedar Waxwing and a flock of nine Mourning Doves previously seen could not be found on the count date.

Iowa City.—During the count week two Snow Buntings, a Mockingbird, 12 Waxwings, six Bluebirds and 20 Longspurs were seen.

Lamoni.—Four Common Mergansers were on Lamoni Reservoir on Dec. 29. A bedraggled Brown Thrasher, a Mockingbird, Redpoll and three Evening Grosbeaks were seen in town before or after the census. Five Ring-necked Pheasants were seen also.

Pine Hollow State Park.—An Ovenbird was in the Crossley's yard on Dec. 9, and either same or another of the species was seen there on Dec. 28.

Webster City.—Sparrow Hawk, Cedar Waxwing, Evening Grosbeak, Purple Finch and Pine Siskin are included in the count for the first time. The Evening Grosbeak is the first Hamilton County record. Red-breasted Nuthatch was also seen during the count period.

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## SPRING CONVENTION TO BE HELD AT VINTON MAY 10 AND 11

The annual spring convention of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union will be held at Vinton, Iowa, May 10 and 11. Vinton has the Dudgeon Lake area of some 600 to 800 acres (State-owned) where we shall have our field trips.

Registration for the convention will open at 8 a.m. Saturday, May 10, at the Lincoln School building. A Saturday morning bird hike, for those wishing to go on the first day, will leave from the Lincoln Junior High School at 5:30 a.m. The Dudgeon Lake refuge and the wooded country along the Cedar River offer some of the most promising birding grounds in eastern Iowa. An interesting program of slides, talks and movies is planned for both morning and afternoon on Saturday. The convention banquet will be held that evening. The guest speaker for the banquet has not been finally chosen at this time, but we are sure that we shall have one of the best in the field.

The Sunday field trips will start from the school building at 5:30 a.m. The groups will reunite for noon lunch at Riverside Park, and the bird list for the morning will be compiled. A complete program and additional information will be sent to each member late in April. It is hoped that all members of the Union will attend this year.—J. P. MOORE.



A. LANG BAILY

A picture clipped from a group photograph taken at the American Ornithologists' Union meeting at Denver, Colorado, September 7, 1956.

## A. LANG BAILY

A. Lang Baily, a Vice-President of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union and former director of the Davenport Public Museum, died at Santa Fe, New Mexico, on October 4, 1957. His remains were cremated and the ashes buried at his favorite camping site in Colorado. He is survived by his wife and two children.

Baily was a graduate of Earlham College, Richmond, Indiana, and received his Master's degree in Technical Theater. Prior to coming to Davenport he was on the staff of the Denver Museum of Natural History. He had been at the Davenport Public Museum five years, four of them as Curator of Exhibits, and the final year as Director. During the five years he was associated with the Museum, Baily made many valuable contributions. He instituted the cataloging and appraising of all Museum material in anticipation of moving into a new building. He also developed and edited the Museum Quarterly. His ill health caused him to resign his position of Museum Director in June of 1957.

Lang had a genuine interest in people and the community in which he lived. He had a deep appreciation of the world of Nature. He played a major part in making the Tri-City Christmas bird census one of the best organized and most productive ones in the United States. He contributed several short notes to Iowa Bird Life on local birds as well as serving in the capacity of Editor of the Inland Bird Banding News.

An editorial in the "Daily Times" said: "The death of A. Lang Baily brings sorrow to all familiar with his contribution to the Museum. His personality created for Mr. Baily many warm friendships . . . He recognized the Museum as a priceless community asset and he will be remembered for laboring hard and well to enhance its public service."

Lang was 29 years old at the time of his passing, but he crowded a record of accomplishment into his short lifetime. He is missed, but his distinct contributions remain as his memorial.—JAMES HODGES, 1514 East High St., Davenport, Iowa.

# WATER-BIRD MIGRATION AT GOOSE AND LITTLE WALL LAKES, HAMILTON COUNTY, IOWA, SPRING OF 1955

By JACK M. SAMUELSON  
and  
GEORGE O. HENDRICKSON

Dept. of Zoology & Entomology  
Iowa State College  
AMES, IOWA

The counts were made mainly by the senior author from March 25 to May 30, 1955, usually at two-day intervals. A 6x35 binocular was used regularly, and occasionally a 10x50 binocular by the junior author. March 25 was the last day of a very cold and windy spell, following a spell of mild weather. Until March 28 about 80 per cent of each lake was covered with a sheet of thin ice. On March 30 both lakes were almost entirely free of ice. Submergent and floating vegetation appeared quite dense by April 27 at both lakes.

Among the shorebirds five Dowitchers were seen on May 6 and 8, two Hudsonian Godwits on May 11 and May 20 at Little Wall Lake. At Goose Lake one Black-bellied Plover was noted on April 27, eight Willets on May 11 and four on May 13, eight Dowitchers on May 11 and four on May 13. In addition to Pied-billed Grebes seen daily from April 11 to May 30, an Eared Grebe was sighted on April 11 and three Horned Grebes on April 15. Four Double-crested Cormorants were observed on May 1, and 4. The waterfowl numbers are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Geese, Ducks and Coots at Little Wall Lake, Spring, 1955

|                        | Date<br>First Seen | Dates of<br>Main Flight | Largest<br>Concentration | Date<br>Last Seen |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Canada Goose           | March 25           | March 25-April 30       | 78                       | April 30          |
| White-fronted Goose    | March 25           |                         | 8                        | March 25          |
| Snow Goose             | March 27           |                         | 8                        | March 27          |
| Blue Goose             | March 25           |                         | 25                       | March 27          |
| Mallard                | March 25           | March 25-April 4        | 275                      | May 11            |
| Gadwall                | March 28           | March 30-April 1        | 52                       | May 11            |
| Pintail                | March 25           | March 25-April 4        | 225                      | April 4           |
| Green-winged Teal      | March 28           |                         | 19                       | April 1           |
| Blue-winged Teal       | March 28           | April 4-May 1           | 395                      | May 30            |
| American Widgeon       | March 25           | March 25-April 15       | 76                       | May 30            |
| Shoveler               | March 25           | March 25-April 9        | 150                      | May 27            |
| Redhead                | March 25           | March 25-April 13       | 500                      | April 20          |
| Ring-necked Duck       | March 25           | March 25-April 1        | 600                      | May 11            |
| Canvasback             | March 25           | March 25-April 9        | 800                      | May 11            |
| Lesser Scaup           | March 25           | March 25-April 13       | 1000                     | May 20            |
| Common Goldeneye       | March 25           |                         | 50                       | March 27          |
| Bufflehead             | March 25           |                         | 60                       | March 30          |
| Red-breasted Merganser | April 6            |                         | 2                        | April 6           |
| American Coot          | March 25           | April 4-May 15          | 700                      | May 30            |



Table 2. Geese, Ducks and Coots at Goose Lake, Spring, 1955

|                     | Date<br>First Seen | Dates of<br>Main Flight | Largest<br>Concentration | Date<br>Last Seen |
|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|
| Canada Goose        | March 25           | March 25-28             | 74                       | March 28          |
| White-fronted Goose | March 25           |                         | 3                        | March 25          |
| Blue Goose          | March 27           |                         | 26                       | March 27          |
| Mallard             | March 25           | March 25-April 4        | 350                      | May 22            |
| Gadwall             | March 28           | March 30-April 15       | 73                       | May 9             |
| Pintail             | March 25           | March 25-April 3        | 150                      | April 29          |
| Green-winged Teal   | March 25           | April 4-April 13        | 24                       | April 13          |
| Blue-winged Teal    | March 25           | April 1-May 6           | 325                      | May 30            |
| American Widgeon    | March 25           | April 1-April 15        | 86                       | May 30            |
| Shoveler            | March 25           | March 25-April 11       | 150                      | May 30            |
| Wood Duck           | May 1              |                         | 2                        | May 4             |
| Redhead             | March 25           | March 25-April 13       | 450                      | April 29          |
| Ring-necked Duck    | March 25           | March 25-April 13       | 425                      | May 20            |
| Canvasback          | March 25           | March 25-April 13       | 600                      | April 15          |
| Lesser Scaup        | March 25           | March 25-April 25       | 800                      | May 23            |
| Common Goldeneye    | March 25           | March 25-26             | 18                       | April 15          |
| Bufflehead          | March 25           | March 25-April 1        | 43                       | April 1           |
| Ruddy Duck          | May 2              |                         | 3                        | May 4             |
| Hooded Merganser    | April 11           |                         | 4                        | May 4             |
| American Coot       | March 25           | April 4-29              | 800                      | May 30            |

## A NEW LAKE IN SOUTHERN IOWA

By J. DONALD GILLASPEY

Route 3  
LAMONI, IOWA

In 1956 the town of Lamoni constructed a new lake from which to obtain its municipal water supply. This reservoir exceeds one mile in length and covers 95 acres when full. It is located 1½ miles northwest of town.

Heavy rains on April 2, 1957, partially filled the lake. Promptly the next day it was occupied by about 2,000 ducks, of which about half were Lesser Scaups and the remainder various mid-season species.

The presence of the lake seems to attract many species other than strictly water birds. On May 11, 1957, I observed about 20 Yellow-headed Blackbirds in a flock of about 50 Cowbirds. From May 11 through May 20, flocks of 50 to 100 Bobolinks were very common on roadside fences or in the fields. On May 19 and 20, hundreds of migrating swallows of various species were over the lake most of the day. On May 26 I counted 10 Upland Plovers in a sparse pasture adjoining the lake and 14 in the same field on July 15.

In about 15 counties of south-central Iowa there are now perhaps between 30 and 40 artificial lakes of fairly large size. There are also a great many farm ponds of smaller extent. The total number of these farm ponds constructed in recent years is considerably more than 10,000. They range in size from a tenth of an acre up to 2 or 3 acres, but most of them are half an acre or less. To construct the ponds a clay dam is built across a gully or waterway by use of a bull-dozer and dirt scoop. The periods of drought during the last three years have shown the importance of ponds for livestock and farmstead water supply.

This increase in the number of lakes and ponds in southern Iowa is certainly beneficial to many species of birds, as well as to other forms of wildlife. A small border of grass, weeds, bushes, or trees not plowed or

mowed grows up around most lakes and ponds. This provides cover for wildlife in addition to water supply.

So many of mankind's present-day activities have an adverse effect on birds and their habitat. Drainage of marshes, clearing of woods, spraying roadsides with brush-killer, and destruction of birds by autos on the highways are only a few examples of such. Thus it is with satisfaction that we are able to call attention to a constructive development here in southern Iowa that will be of permanent benefit to many forms of wildlife.

#### GENERAL NOTES

**Christmas Holiday Notes from Wheatland.**—During the holidays we saw 27 species of birds in our vicinity. On Dec. 21, 1957, a Great Blue Heron fished in a stream, and on Dec. 24 a Kingfisher on Rock Creek. We counted 15 Meadowlarks in a field with many Starlings. Besides these we saw Red-tailed, Red-shouldered and Rough-legged Hawks, Mourning Doves, Great Horned Owl, Flicker Red-bellied, Red-headed, Hairy and Downy Woodpeckers, Horned Lark, Blue Jay, Crow, Chickadee Titmouse, White-breasted Nuthatch, Shrike (sp.), House Sparrow, Cardinal, Purple Finch, Goldfinch, Slate-colored Junco, Tree Sparrow. On December 7 a Pileated Woodpecker displayed himself beautifully.—C. ESTHER COPP, Wheatland, Iowa.

**White-winged Crossbills in Black Hawk County.**—With other bird students in this region I was fortunate enough to see White-winged Crossbills during the past winter. I first saw them at the Dr. Lantz home in Cedar Falls, where there were three. On December 22, 1957, I saw between 20 and 25 in Byrnes Park, Waterloo. Following a hike to Black Hawk Creek, I visited an evergreen grove in the park. In this grove I saw some movement which I took to be sparrows, but my glasses revealed female crossbills. As I moved under the tree I spotted eight birds on the ground, two males and six females, only 10 feet away. As I stood watching them, more birds dropped down from the trees until there were 12 females and six males feeding near me. I could see the crossed bills plainly and it was a thrill to have them so near. I saw crossbills at I.S.T.C. Commons, Cedar Falls, on February 21, 1958, and on Martin Road, Waterloo, on February 24.—RUSSELL HAYS, 825 Franklin St., Waterloo, Iowa.

**White-winged Crossbills in the Estherville Region.**—After hearing that White-winged Crossbills were being seen in nearby Minnesota, I started a grove-by-grove hunt for them in my area.

The Estherville Hillcrest cemetery was a likely spot and close at hand but yielded nothing at first. Finally, on December 23, 1957, a flock of 15 was found about 8 miles northwest of Estherville at the State Line Cemetery. Accompanied by Mrs. Jones and B. O. Wolden, I sought this flock again on December 26 but did not find it at the State Line Cemetery. However, a flock of seven was found at a farm grove one mile north of Swan Lake (2 miles north of Superior). This grove entirely surrounded the farm buildings and was made up chiefly of about 400 white spruce trees. The trees had never been pruned and formed a perfect bird "jungle." The grove was visited on December 28 for a Christmas count and 17 White-winged Crossbills were seen, as well as Golden-crowned Kinglets and Red-breasted Nuthatches. On January 1, 1958, Dr. Everett Christensen photographed the crossbills. Only a small flock was found and their cooperation left much to be desired.

On January 2 an attempt was made to band this flock. The net was stretched up under the "shade" of the evergreens on the windy side of the grove (with temperature near zero). One adult female was finally netted

and banded. Since only three birds could be found and they were very uncooperative, the project was abandoned.

On January 5, repeated visits to the Estherville cemetery finally paid off as three birds were found feeding on the ground under the white spruce trees. Banding nets were put up as soon as possible but the birds vanished. A phone call to Dr. Christensen revealed that he was again at the grove 3 miles north of Superior, but before I could drive there he had taken his pictures and gone. I did not get him to photograph my flock at Estherville. My flock seemed to work in the sun while those near Superior seemed always to feed in the shade. The Estherville flock was found again in the afternoon and nets were stretched while the birds fed almost underfoot. All three birds were quickly netted, banded and photographed. The 35 mm. slides are not of professional quality but do show two females and one male White-winged Crossbill.—M. L. JONES, Fort Defiance State Park, Estherville, Iowa.

**Mass Migration of Passerine Birds Through Eastern Iowa in the Spring of 1956.**—The night of May 5, 1956 was very dark but the sky seemed filled with "peets," "tseets," and "tweets" as untold thousands of small birds passed overhead in a great tidal wave of migration to the north. I have often heard small groups of passers flying over at intervals during the night in both spring and fall migrations, but nothing I have ever heard compared to the incessant twitter on this night. It kept up from 9 p.m. until 1 a.m. when I finally became tired of listening and went to bed.

On the morning of May 6 at 8 a.m., I glanced out of the window and saw a flock of LeConte's Sparrows, perhaps 50 or more, systematically searching through the grass on my lawn for food items. Three Yellowthroats were seen hopping from twig to twig among my flowering currants. In my lilacs were several Black-and-white Warblers which must have arrived tardily with the crowd. On the ground among the May apples, under the flowering currants and lilacs, I saw a Veery, two Ovenbirds, and a Northern Waterthrush. A surprise visitor that I had not before seen in my back yard was a much frightened Wood Thrush, which tried to take a short cut through the door of a glassed-in back porch and could not find its way out. An Orchard Oriole, the only one I have ever seen in this community, put in an appearance twice during the morning. During the whole day, hedges, gardens, lawns and trees seemed literally crawling with birds which were loitering after a long, hard flight.

Many of the migrants flying at low level struck television antennae, wires, flag poles and other obstacles as they flew over the town. In two blocks I counted eight Ovenbirds, six Yellowthroats, and two Black-and-white Warblers which had dashed themselves to death on various hazards of civilization and fallen to the Main street of Dyersville.

In the spring of 1957 I listened for the tidal wave of migration to come again. Apparently the 1956 migration was quite unusual since the "twitters" occurred night after night from the 27th of April until the second week in May. Not once in the spring of 1957 did I find LeConte's Sparrows on my front lawn or forest birds such as Waterthrushes, Ovenbirds or Wood Thrushes in the bushes in my back yard. Perhaps the great tidal wave of migration on May 5, 1956, was due to a giant wind storm or other weather disturbance to the south of Iowa. No matter what the cause, I expect to be listening in the night in late April and early May for many springs to come in the hope that I may again experience the thrill of May 5 and 6, 1956.—EMMETT POLDER, 512 East Victoria St., Dyersville, Iowa



**A Winter Mockingbird.**—Acting on directions from Mrs. Harold Brown, on February 10, 1958, Mrs. Ray King, Mrs. Barlow, George Faulkner, Dr. Robertson and I succeeded in finding a Mockingbird about 16 miles south of Waterloo on highway 63 and a mile east of Blessing Church. To our surprise and delight, the bird flew down the ditch toward us as we came to the described spot. Mrs. Brown and Mrs. King talked to the people who lived near by but apparently they had not attracted the bird with feeders or food. It was entirely on its own, as far as we knew, and had braved some very severe winter weather.—RUSSELL HAYS, 825 Franklin St., Waterloo, Iowa.

**Correction.**—On page 101 in the December, 1957, issue of Iowa Bird Life, line 2 should read Chestnut-collared Longspur instead of Chestnut-sided. Line 8 should read Black-headed Grosbeak instead of Black-backed. These errors, which should have been caught by the Editor in reading proof, were in the article on "Banding Waterfowl in Alberta," by Dennis L. Carter.

**Fall Warbler Studies at Sioux City.**—The early fall warbler flight, which comes in late August and early September, is always stimulating to me as summer is still with us. Many flowers are yet in bloom, weather is balmy, and the warblers are inclined to stay around the home grounds for a few days. Water is available, heavy foliage is there for hiding, and food is everywhere. In 1957 some of our trees were literally festooned with hanging web-worms of various colors while spiders large and small seemed more common than usual.

The first arrivals in the fall of 1957 were the Redstarts, and with them a few Yellow Warblers. The latter bird showed a very sharp decline in numbers in urban areas. It is not the common Summer Yellowbird of 30 years ago. On August 28, during a spell of fine summer weather, Canada Warblers arrived. With them for the next few days were Nashville, Tennessee, Yellow, Chestnut-sided, Wilson's, and Pine Warblers.

The Canada Warblers led me indirectly to the Pine Warblers, for as I was watching the former feeding in a dogwood bush, I heard the soft, lisping call of a warbler just overhead in a white cedar. I looked and saw two birds that resembled young Goldfinches, but the low call given now and then labeled them as warblers. When I put the glasses on them I knew I had my first Iowa record of this rather rare warbler. This was mid-morning and these two warblers fed for several minutes about 10 feet from me. They moved up into the elm trees and were soon lost to my hearing. Most warblers like to feed in arbor-vitae trees. I kept my watch and was rewarded shortly after three o'clock by soft lisps when the two Pine Warblers returned to feed, this time within 4 feet of my binoculars. They spotted insects on the end twigs and as they fluttered in the air, the white areas in their tails were shown to best advantage. The birds soon left and I thought that surely they were gone for good. I was wrong, however. At four o'clock, while watching a Canada and a Wilson's Warbler bathing in my concrete bird-bath, the two Pine Warblers flew down and joined them. After the splashing was over and the warblers had departed, I decided that I had completed almost a perfect day.

Pedestal bird-baths in the garden are fine, but I recommend, especially during migration, a wide but shallow bath on the ground for sheltered spots near hedge or shrubbery. An old disc blade from a farmer's disc-harrow makes an ideal ground-level bath by plugging the hole with a bit of concrete and setting the blade level with the ground.—WILLIAM YOUNG-WORTH, 3119 East Second St., Sioux City, Iowa.



SHORT-EARED OWL  
F. W. Kent photograph

**Cass County Records, 1957.**—During the year I made three trips to Cass County, Iowa, and obtained the following records of interest.

February 9, 1957: I found a flock of about 30 Harris' Sparrows south of Lewis and four more individuals north of town. In the cemetery east of Lewis I saw two Pine Siskins feeding with Goldfinches.

June 8, 1957: South of Lewis I observed one Carolina Wren, two Blue-gray Gnatcatchers, and five Bell's Vireos. In Pioneer Park at Lewis I saw four immature Screech Owls (three gray phase, one red phase) sitting in a tree. I also found two Redwinged Blackbird nests in the park. One was about 10 feet above the ground in a lilac bush and the other was about 5 feet high in a spirea bush. The latter nest contained one young bird.

June 9, 1957: I saw one female Hooded Merganser and one American Coot on the ponds at the Cocklin Fish Farm north of Griswold.

August 15, 1957: I observed one Carolina Wren and five Bell's Vireos south of Lewis.

The above observations include three species (Hooded Merganser, Carolina Wren and Pine Siskin) which were not among the 169 species I recorded in Cass County in 1956 (Iowa Bird Life, XXVI, No. 4, pp. 85-86).—DENNIS L. CARTER, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

**Bird Life at Union Slough Refuge in 1957.**—At Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, Kossuth County, Iowa, our waterfowl use in 1957 could be described as "a general large decrease over 1956." In the year 1957 our peak population was nearly 1,000 Snow and Blue Geese while 6,500 were reported in 1956. In 1956 we had a peak of 105 Canada Geese; in 1957 a peak number of 70 Canadas and 20 Hutchins Geese used the refuge. In 1956, 25,000 Mallards used the refuge during the third week of November, while the peak population in 1957 was 5,745 Mallards. High lights in 1957 were 334 Wood Ducks and 610 Canvasbacks that used the refuge. This was unusual as the refuge is not ideal for either species.

Unusual birds sighted on the refuge during the fall of 1957 were: Willet, Marbled Godwit, Black-bellied Plover, Golden Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Raven, Bald Eagle, Krider's Red-tailed Hawk, Peregrine Falcon, Common Redpoll, and Snow Bunting. The "snow birds" were first observed on Nov. 9, 1957. We have been developing a bird list for Union Slough Refuge and during 1957 identified 152 species here.—HAROLD H. BURGESS, Refuge Manager, Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, Burt, Iowa.

**Raven Sighted at Union Slough Refuge.**—On October 18, 1957, I observed a Raven flying over Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, Kossuth County, Iowa. Earlier in the morning I had observed a large black bird perched in a tree some 1,000 yards across Buffalo Creek from me. I watched it with my 7x35 binoculars, and although I suspected it was a Raven due to its large size, I could not positively identify it at that time since it did not call or make any movements. A half hour later this bird soared across a dike about 200 yards from me and gave a typical "croak" call. I watched it with my binoculars as it alternately flapped and soared until it flew out of sight to the north over Smith Pool.

I have observed the Raven in Michigan's Upper Peninsula during several different winters and have no doubt that the bird observed on Union Slough Refuge was a Raven.

By some coincidence I was lucky enough to observe the same species on October 18, 1956, on French Island, Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge, Clayton County, Iowa, and reported the observation in the Upper Mississippi River Wildlife and Fish Refuge Narrative Report for the Period Ending December 31, 1956. (Available at the Upper Mississippi Refuge Office at Winona, Minnesota, and at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Offices at Minneapolis, Minnesota, and Washington, D.C.)

It appears to me that these observations, coupled with the positive identification by Jack W. Musgrove, Museum Director of State Department of History and Archives, of a Raven collected on October 7, 1956, in Dickinson County and Biologist James G. Sieh's identification of the remains of a Raven in 1952 (see Iowa Bird Life, XXVII, pp. 21-22), indicate the Raven is a regular visitor to northern Iowa and should be added to the Check-List of Iowa Birds.

I reported my observation to Jack W. Musgrove, and he mentioned another Iowa record in the fall of 1957. Writing under date of December 2, Mr. Musgrove said, in part: "I want to thank you for your notes concerning the Raven and might say that another Raven has been added to the collection from this state. It was taken October 5, 1957, in Emmet County



by Ralph Lempke. There are apparently a number of these birds coming into our state each year, and more careful observation will establish other records."—HAROLD H. BURGESS, Refuge Manager, Union Slough National Wildlife Refuge, Burt, Iowa.

### RECENT BIRD BOOKS

**THE WARBLERS OF AMERICA**, by Ludlow Griscom, Alexander Sprunt, Jr., and other leading ornithologists (Devin-Adair Co., New York, 1957; cloth, square 8vo, pp. i-xii plus 1-356, with 35 colored plates and 45 text drawings by John Henry Dick; price, \$15.00).

This long-awaited book was worth waiting for. It is an enjoyable book to read, as well as an excellent addition to one's working library. It contains well-written and interesting chapters on:

- Introduction to the Warbler Family
- The Classification of Warblers
- The Techniques of Warbler Study
- The Songs of Warblers
- Interpretations of Warbler Songs
- The Geographical Distribution of Warblers
- Foraging Ranges of Warblers
- Gulf Migration Routes of 38 Eastern Warblers

These chapters are then supplemented by a separate account of each warbler found in Central and North America, with restricted notes on the warblers of South America. The account of each species is written by a different contributor.

The color plates were printed in Holland. Many of the plates illustrate plumages that generally are not found in other bird books. There are 20 illustrations of immature plumages; one of a winter male; one young male; two fledgelings; and four in fall plumage.

It is an enjoyable book to read. The chapters on techniques of warbler study and the songs of warblers bring back many memories of enjoyable hours in the field, plus a refreshing recall of songs not heard for many months or years. To the so-called "expert," these chapters may appear to be superficial. This is understandable. Many of the "experts" have long missed the enjoyment of birding.

The new book represents an excellent addition to the working library. The plates have been mentioned. The summary of each species and the range maps are interesting and useful, particularly if you do not have a set of Bent's "Life Histories" or Chapman's "Warblers".

It is a relatively easy task to read through a book of this nature and build a list of detail criticism. However, it should be kept in mind that the authors and publisher most certainly were not attempting to appeal only to the professional ornithologist. If this had been the intent, to cultivate so restricted a market, probably few of us could have afforded to purchase such a book.

Finally, mention should be made of the chapter, "Notes On Contributors," which added to the enjoyment of the book. Generally speaking, this volume serves as an excellent introduction to the Warbler family. Perhaps the future will produce such a book on the Finches.—JAMES HODGES.

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**THE BIRDS OF ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY, VIRGINIA**, by Joseph James Murray (Virginia Society of Ornithology, Sweet Briar, Va., 1957; paper binding, pp. 1-59, with one map; price, 50c).

Interest in bird study, both popular and serious, is steadily growing over North America, and it is fine to note the numerous regional bird lists

that bridge some of the gaps in our knowledge of birds in certain parts of the country. The latest regional list is this very nicely printed booklet. It gives a list of 264 species and subspecies in well annotated form. This county gets its name from the famous Natural Bridge of Virginia, which is located in the southwest corner of the county, almost within the Blue Ridge Mountains. It is a region of much scenic beauty and tourist attraction, with a varied and highly interesting bird fauna. Incidentally, the author has been editor of "The Raven" for some 28½ years. This is the journal of the Virginia Society of Ornithology. Copies of the Rockbridge County booklet may be obtained from F. R. Scott, 115 Kennondale Lane, Richmond 26, Virginia.—F. J. P.

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## A LETTER FROM YOUR PRESIDENT

The State of Iowa is blessed with having one of the better birding areas of the United States the year around. A check list prepared by Philip A. DuMont in 1954 shows Iowa has 275 species of birds which can be found with a degree of regularity within the state, and 65 additional species of rare or accidental occurrence. With this fine cross-section of American bird life, Iowans should find a great deal of relaxation and enjoyment in the pursuit of the excellent hobby of bird hiking and watching. A suitable pair of binoculars would cost many Iowans much less than would be paid out for tranquilizer pills and doctor bills.

Why don't we members of the Iowa Ornithologists' Union who enjoy the thrills of knowing our bird friends, lend a hand to our neighbors and help them to enjoy this rich pastime with us?

Of the 99 counties in Iowa, there are 40 which have no members in the IOU. Twenty-eight others have less than three members, leaving only about one-third of Iowa where persons are taking an active part in bird study. There must be hundreds of people who would like to get better acquainted with birds but feel inadequate to teach themselves.

Now that spring is here, why don't our members who live in counties where there are only one or two members or none at all put a piece in the county-seat newspaper stating a time and place where anyone wishing to be taken on a conducted bird hike may meet for this purpose? You might be surprised how many would show up. Besides, think of the fun it would be for you and perhaps many new members for our Union could be secured.

Those counties which have no members are: Adams, Appanoose, Audubon, Butler, Calhoun, Cass, Cherokee, Chickasaw, Clarke, Crawford, Davis, Delaware, Fayette, Franklin, Fremont, Greene, Guthrie, Hamilton, Hancock, Harrison, Howard, Ida, Iowa, Jackson, Louisa, Mitchell, Monona, Monroe, Montgomery, Plymouth, Pocahontas, Pottawattamie, Sac, Sioux, Taylor, Union, Van Buren, Washington, Wayne, Winnebago and Wright.

Those counties with only one or two members are: Adair, Boone, Bremer, Cedar, Cerro Gordo, Clay, Clayton, Des Moines, Floyd, Hardin, Henry, Kosuth, Lee, Lucas, Lyon, Marion, Mills, Muscatine, O'Brien, Osceola, Palo Alto, Poweshiek, Ringgold, Shelby, Tama, Warren, Webster and Worth. If you live in one of these counties and need help, write and we will give you the names of club members who may live near you.

Give this a try while the spring migration is in full swing and see if you don't meet some new and wonderful friends.—JOHN PAUL MOORE